



LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission Minutes

Date: Thursday, January 20, 2022

Time: 6:30 PM- 8:30 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the telephone dial-in information provided.

Please read Governor Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provision of Open Meeting Law for more information regarding virtual public hearings and meetings: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-meeting-law-order-march-12-2020/download>

Attendees: Commissioners: Lisa Krinsky (Co-Chair), Andy Robinson (Co-Chair), Susan Ryan-Vollmar, Kari Sasportas, Helen Newberg, Molly Blaauw Gillis.

Liaisons: Jillian Harvey- DEI, Marci Shapiro-Ide- Council on Aging, Julie Flaherty-APD, Julia Starkey- Robbins Library

Guests: Amos Meeks, Kellye Eversole

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm. Susan Ryan-Vollmar assigned as minute-taker.

1. Remote participation statement and guidelines reviewed by AR
2. Welcome and introductions
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. HN motions to approve consent agenda, MG seconded, motion approved unanimously.
4. Commission Membership/Recruitment/Infrastructure
 - a. Recruitment Update – JH said she knew of two potential candidates, though one was also potentially interested in applying to the Arlington Human Rights Commission. MG expressed desire to have a larger pool of candidates to pick from and suggests that RC broaden its reach by

posting to Arlington FB groups, putting up flyers in coffee shops, notifying school groups, etc. Everyone agrees.

- b. Given that one of the vacancies on the Rainbow Commission is a designate of the School Committee, MG said that she has talked with Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dr. Rod MacNeal about how the School Committee appointee to the Rainbow Commission gets selected. MG says that in the past the RC has brought a School Committee candidate to the School Committee for approval. AR notes that lots of appeals for candidates have been pushed out through Rainbow Commission communication channels on social media and via the newsletter. Commissioners talk about reaching out to people on the Rainbow Commission volunteer list to ask if there is interest in applying to be a commissioner. Also mention of asking other commissions in town to put notice of the RC vacancies in their newsletters.
5. Vote on New Co-Chairs for 2022
 - a. LEK notes that AR has finished his two-year term as co-chair of the Rainbow Commission. Thank him for his leadership and numerous contributions to the Commission. All other Commissioners thank AR and echo LEK's comments. AR motions to vote for SRV as new co-chair. HN seconded. Motion approved unanimously. SRV is new co-chair for 2022-2024.
 6. Liaison Updates: Restricted to time-sensitive updates
 - a. Council on Aging – MSI December 18 social event planned with LexPride had to be cancelled due to COVID. The weekly Zoom check-in group on Tuesdays is going strong with increased participation, likely due to COVID. A “Gay for Good” Valentine’s Day craft event scheduled for the weekend before Valentine’s Day might be a good recruitment opportunity.
 - b. Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) – JH reports that the Select Board unanimously endorsed her request to use ARPA funding to pay for the community equity audit. An RFP to hire a firm/consultant to conduct the audit will be posted on January 24. Hoping that the audit can begin by April. It is expected to take a year. JH also received approval for a new community outreach and engagement coordinator, and she is finalizing the job description. Town has also approved the hiring of an ADA Coordinator, which will be key to providing support to the town’s Disability Commission.
 - c. Library – JS reports that the Queer Book Group met on January 19. It was a small meeting; hopefully more people will attend future meetings. Robbins Library is closed to in-person events, and they do not yet know when they can meet again in person. Reel Queer film group will be virtual in February and decision about which movie will be watched will be made next week. The Queer Book Group will meet again in March and the book title will be announced soon.
 - d. Police Department – CF reports that the Arlington Police Department was awarded a \$46,000 grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Safety to pay for body-worn cameras. The town is currently negotiating with both police unions to get an agreement on wearing body cameras. The department is also waiting for guidance from the state’s POST Commission on implementing a policy for the use of body cameras. CF

says that she hopes to have the body cameras in use soon. CF reports that APD has applied for a grant to fund a second jail diversion clinician. CF reports that some officers have resigned in the past few months while others have retired so APD has launched a recruitment campaign in partnership with Middlesex Community College and the police departments in Belmont and Bedford. As part of these efforts, a free course will be offered to anyone who signs up to take the civil service exam.

- e. Other updates – SRV reports that the Civilian Police Advisory Board Study Committee, which she is on as the Rainbow Commission's designee, has submitted a warrant to Town Meeting requesting that a permanent Civilian Police Advisory Commission be created in Arlington.
7. Domestic Partnership Revisions – Amos Meeks, Town Meeting Member
- a. AM reports that his warrant article to update the town's existing domestic partnership bylaw will be submitted. The warrant article is needed to update the town's existing domestic partnership bylaw so that it clearly covers relationships with more than two people. The deadline for the Rainbow Commission to sponsor the warrant article is next week. SRV moves to have the Rainbow Commission sponsor the warrant article. HN seconds. Motion approved unanimously. Rainbow Commission will submit warrant article.
8. Working Group Updates and Membership
- a. Community Engagement Events: LEK asks if people have ideas for community engagement events (other than Pride). AR says that the group of LGBTQIA+ commission members from other towns that he attends is planning an event for March 31, which is Transgender Day of Visibility. KS notes that every April is Autism Acceptance Month. She suggests partnering with the town's Disability Commission and/or Human Rights Commission for an awareness raising event. KS to follow up with possible presenter focusing on intersection of LGBTQIA+ and autism as there is high overlap with both identities.
 - b. Education: MG reports that the next meeting of the APS task force on LGBTQIA+ issues is next week. They will be finalizing details of the community-wide speaker series to be launched in the spring. The first event will be moderated by Jeff Perotti who is the founding director of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Safe Schools Program for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Students. The first speaking event will focus on student perspectives.
9. Planning for 2022
- a. MG asks what the RC's flagship events are besides Pride. She worries about getting spread too thin over a bunch of events and suggests picking two or three events to work on for 2022. LEK agrees and says that many events could simply be co-sponsorship with another organization that does most of the organizing work. And for other things, such as a youth prom, the Rainbow Commission could contribute funds. SRV notes that it might be helpful to think of the RC's work over the course of a year as falling into three buckets: community engagement, networking with other towns, and systems change, which MG's work with the schools is a good

example of. More discussion of LexPride Black Queer and Aging event. JH notes that planning for collaborative events could begin earlier. Discussion turns to town systems and LEK notes that she and AR were contacted by someone from Envision Arlington asking for language to include on the next Envision Arlington survey about sexual and gender identity. They were only given a few days to get the information to Envision Arlington and LEK wondered why this was being done at the last minute: Is there a way to get these questions standardized? LEK notes that last year's questionnaire included a question about whether Arlington was a welcoming place for LGBTQIA+ people and there was no way of knowing if the people answering the question were LGBTQIA+. KS asks if Arlington does a community health assessment as that can be another way to gather data related to diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns. More discussion of equity/inclusion in schools.

10. Public Engagement and Open Commentary

a. No comments.

11. Close and Next Meeting: Thursday February 17, 2022

8:50pm: SRV moved to adjourn meeting, AR seconds, meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: February 17, 2022, 6:30 pm, Remote Participation

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact Jillian Harvey, jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.